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Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions

Letter dated 13 November 2007 from the President of the Economic and Social Council to the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women

The 2007 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council was an historic event that laid the foundation for a renewed and strengthened Council. Most importantly, it implemented the vision of the 2005 World Summit by opening new avenues for its future work, particularly through the annual ministerial review and the launch of the Development Cooperation Forum. These new modalities will ensure that the Council remains the central mechanism for the follow-up of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits and will serve as mechanisms to step up efforts to bring the international community on track for meeting the Millennium Development Goals by the target date of 2015.

I am pleased to inform you that the Council's inaugural annual ministerial review exceeded all expectations, particularly in that it provided increased focus on and solid content for the discussion of policies and efforts needed to strengthen and accelerate the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals relating to the eradication of poverty and hunger through the global partnership for development. The national voluntary presentations by Ministers of six developing countries, Bangladesh, Barbados, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Ethiopia and Ghana, were particularly well received by all member States as they provided an excellent opportunity for knowledge-sharing and information exchange.

Five key policy messages emerged from these presentations. The first was that national development strategies are working but not at the pace required, that is, an acceleration and scaling-up of the implementation process is needed. Second, there is a need for the global partnership to be made more effective in all its dimensions. Third, the global economic environment should be made pro-development and pro-poor. Fourth, monitoring the implementation of commitments and accountability

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should be strengthened. Lastly, emerging threats, such as climate change and desertification, which are obstacles for the realization of these goals, must be urgently addressed.

A high number of countries, both developed and developing, have now volunteered to be reviewed by the Council at the 2008 substantive session, highlighting the Council's role as a convener of and central forum for the review of the internationally agreed development goals.

In addition, and as mentioned in my letter to you dated 22 October 2007 (see annex II), the Council, during its resumed substantive session last month, adopted a multi-year programme of work for the annual ministerial review, as recommended in General Assembly resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the work of the Council. This will provide the Council with a solid workplan as well as the lead time needed by the subsidiary bodies and other relevant entities to enhance their contributions to the Council's work.

The launch of the biennial Development Cooperation Forum provided an opportunity for a stimulating dialogue on issues such as quality, quantity, coordination and impact of aid. This bodes well for the 2008 Development Cooperation Forum, which will once again bring together, at this unique global platform, all of the key actors to engage in a dialogue on key policy issues affecting development cooperation, with a view to coming up with proposals on how such cooperation can best promote implementation of the internationally agreed development goals.

With regard to the other outcomes of the Council's 2007 substantive session, I would like to highlight some of the important proposals made by the Council that are of relevance to the functional commissions. A list of the resolutions adopted by the Council specifically calling for action by the functional commissions is annexed for your reference (see annex I).

Of these, I wish to draw your attention in particular to Council resolution 2007/29 on the role of the Council in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits in the light of relevant General Assembly resolutions, including resolution 61/16. In that resolution, the Council, inter alia, noted the completion by the functional commissions of the review of their working methods, also noted the decision by some of the subsidiary bodies to continue to review their methods of work, as mandated in General Assembly resolution 57/270 B, recognized the need to further enhance coordination and cooperation between the Council and its functional commissions and subsidiary bodies so as to allow the Council to carry out its crucial role as the central mechanism for system-wide coordination more effectively and requested the functional commissions, regional commissions and other relevant subsidiary bodies of the Council to continue contributing, in accordance with their respective mandates, to the work of the Council.

I would greatly appreciate it if the issues raised above could be brought to the attention of the Commission on the Status of Women for consideration and action, and I thank you for your continued assistance and collaboration in that regard.

(*Signed*) Dalius **Čekuolis**

Annex I

Resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council in 2007 requesting follow-up

A. Resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council in 2007 requesting follow-up by all functional commissions

Resolution number	*Title*
2007/2	The role of the United Nations system in providing full and productive employment and decent work for all
2007/29	Role of the Economic and Social Council in the integrated and coordinated implementation of the outcomes of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits, in the light of General Assembly resolutions 50/227, 52/12 B and 57/270 B

B. Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council in 2007 requesting follow-up by the Commission on the Status of Women

Resolution number	*Title*
2007/7	Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women

C. Resolution calling for action by all relevant entities of the United Nations system

Resolution number	*Title*
2007/33	Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system

Annex II

Letter dated 22 October 2007 from the President of the Economic and Social Council to the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women

I am pleased to inform you that the Economic and Social Council last week adopted its first multi-year work programme for annual ministerial reviews. For the next two years, the annual ministerial reviews will focus on the following themes: 2008: "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development"; and 2009: "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to global public health".

This is a major step forward in pursuance of the 2005 World Summit Outcome and the subsequent General Assembly resolution on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council. The new multi-year work programme will ensure a degree of predictability in the themes of the annual ministerial reviews, which, in turn, will facilitate the full engagement of all entities of the Economic and Social Council system, as well as the mobilization of expertise required from member States, the United Nations system and other stakeholders.

On the substantive side, next year's theme of sustainable development, which encompasses the three pillars of economic growth, social development and environmental protection, provides an important opportunity for the United Nations system to promote the expeditious implementation of the commitment made in this area, in particular the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. This could also be utilized as an opportunity to look at the issue of climate change in the broader perspective of sustainable development, since the Economic and Social Council provides an appropriate platform for such deliberations, leading to the adoption of a ministerial declaration.

The substantive contributions of the functional commissions and expert bodies of the Economic and Social Council will be essential for the success of the reviews. The commissions will have an instrumental role in promoting an effective and coherent mobilization of support for the preparatory processes leading to the annual ministerial review of 2008.

I would therefore like to request the functional commissions and expert bodies of the Council to support the annual ministerial reviews as a priority issue, in order to ensure their full engagement in and allow for adequate preparations for these reviews.

I look forward to working with you closely on this issue of great importance to the whole Economic and Social Council system.

(*Signed*) Dalius **Čekuolis**